# ATOMIC ROBO

THE WORLD'S GREATEST SCIENCE ADVENTURE MAGAZINE!

MANCHUKUO, 1938

I DON'T WANT TO ALARM YOU, BUT I *THINK* THEY'RE GETTING CLOSER.

BOOM

WHAT TIPPED YOU OFF?

<THEY CANNOT BE ALLOWED TO ESCAPE!>

VRRMMM

TRY MISSING A *FEW* BUMPS SO I CAN TAKE A SHOT!

NOT A LOT OF *ROAD* OUT HERE.

*IMPROVISE!*

*OKAY, BUT YOU WON'T LIKE IT.*

WAIT. WHY NOT?

SKRRR

YOU WERE RIGHT!

DON'T WORRY, THIS ISN'T THE BAD PART!

DEPENDS ON THE LANDING.

THIS BETTER BE IT!

BANG

BANG

ZOWING

PWANG

TWONK

KRAK

BOOOM

KRONCH

D'OOF!

FWUMP

BAD NEWS. DROPPED THE GUNS.

WHAT'S THE GOOD NEWS?

NO MORE TANKS.

BOOM

THE HECK IS THAT?

LET'S NOT WAIT AROUND TO FIND OUT.

SKRSHHH

KTHOOOM

KUNMING, TWO MONTHS EARLIER

GENERAL CHENNAULT, SIR? YOU WANTED TO SEE ME.

AT EASE. GOT A MISSION FOR YOU.

UH. I DID MY MISSION, SIR.

Y'DID. THIS ONE'S NEXT.

THE JAPANESE HAVE A VRIL WEAPON PROGRAM?

SOMETHING LIKE IT. EVER HEAR OF DOCTOR LU HUANG?

DON'T THINK SO.

PHYSICIST AT BEIJING UNIVERSITY. "QUANTUM MECHANICS." THAT MEAN ANYTHING TO YOU?

A BIT.

WELL, AN EARLY DRAFT OF DOC LU'S NEW PAPER GOT SOME ATTENTION IN BEIJING LAST YEAR.

"HYPERGEOMETRIC LOOP LENSING EFFECTS ON ZERO-POINT ENERGY CONDENSATES."

THAT MEAN SOMETHING TO YOU TOO?

COULD MEAN A LOT OF THINGS. I'D HAVE TO SEE THE MATH.

WE'RE LUCKY TO HAVE THE TITLE.

OUR EGGHEADS WERE SAYING THAT PAPER WOULDA MADE LU MORE FAMOUS THAN EINSTEIN IF HE'D PUBLISHED IT.

YEAH? WHY DIDN'T HE?

THE JAPANESE INVADED. BEIJING WAS THEIR FIRST TARGET. DOCTOR LU AND ALL HIS WORK DISAPPEARED.

OKAY. DON'T TELL ME. NOW THERE ARE REPORTS OF THE JAPANESE DEVELOPING ZERO-POINT TECHNOLOGY.

REPORTS YOU WILL INVESTIGATE.

WELL, SIR. LIKE I SAID. I AGREED TO ONE MISSION. AND IT'S DONE.

DONE? NOTHING'S DONE, ROBO.

MAYBE THIS IS NEWS TO YOU, BUT TOJO'S NOT GONNA STOP WITH CHINA ANY MORE THAN ADOLF'S GONNA STOP WITH EUROPE.

THE JAPANESE ARE TURNING DOCTOR LU'S THEORIES INTO SOME KIND OF TELEFORCE GUN.

YES. LIKE TESLA'S. THAT GET YOUR ATTENTION?

YOU'LL MEET OUR CONTACT WITH THE ***RESISTANCE*** IN SHANGHAI. THEY'LL GET YOU TO BEIJING TO ***FIND*** DOCTOR LU.

YOU WILL ***DESTROY*** THE JAPANESE TELEFORCE PROJECT BY ***ANY*** MEANS NECESSARY.

AND WHEN ***THAT'S*** DONE, WE'LL DO WHAT COMES ***NEXT.***

*I DON'T EXACTLY* ***BLEND IN.***

YOU'RE A GLOBETROTTING MILLIONAIRE ADVENTURER.

***SHANGHAI'S*** THE ONE PLACE YOU ***WON'T*** STAND OUT.

*EVEN SO. THE JAPANESE WILL WATCH ME LIKE A* ***HAWK.***

***HELL,*** WE'RE COUNTING ON IT. THE MORE THEY WATCH YOU, THE EASIER IT'LL BE FOR THE RESISTANCE TO ROOT OUT SYMPATHIZERS.

SHANGHAI, ONE MONTH LATER

SHOESHINE, MISTER?

YEAH, OKAY.

CREAK

YOU BROKE IT YOU BOUGHT IT, PAL.

YOUR ENGLISH IS PRETTY GOOD.

NOT BAD YOURSELF.

SHUFF SHUFF FWIP

SO. UH.

SEEN THE NEW **FRED ASTAIRE** PICTURE?

SNAP

YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THE CODE PHRASE.

NO?

THERE AREN'T TOO MANY PEOPLE YOU CAN BE.

FWUP SHUFF

YEAH, I GUESS NOT.

THINK I'M BEING WATCHED.

YEAH, DEFINITELY. YOU'RE FUNNY LOOKING.

OKAY, DONE. GET UP. QUICK BEFORE YOU BREAK THE CHAIR.

YOU GOT A REAL WAY WITH CUSTOMERS, KID.

THEY MUST NOT PAY ROBOTS TOO MUCH, HUH?

WHERE AM I HEADED?

ANYTHING GOES. THREE BLOCKS SOUTH. CAN'T MISS IT.

THINK I PAID THAT TWERP A DOLLAR.

THREE BLOCKS TO THE SOUTH...

舞蹈

ANYTHING GOES

CLUB

YEAH. THERE'S NO MISSING THAT.

CIGARETTE?

NO THANKS.

YOU SURE? TAKE A GOOD LOOK.

TRYING TO CUT DOWN.

OH.

JUST ACT NATURAL.

AND LOOK UP WITHOUT LOOKING UP.

D'AH!

CRASH

<HE *PUSHED* ME!>

UH. HEY. WAIT A MINUTE.

Y'GOT THE WRONG IDEA!

I CAN EXPLAIN!

JUST SEND ME THE CLEANING BILL. WE'LL CALL IT EVEN.

THIS WAY.

HE BUMPED INTO ME, Y'KNOW.

THIS WAY.

MR. CHEN.

THE TRIADS ARE KNOWN TO HAVE TIES TO THE RESISTANCE. WE HAD TO MAKE SURE THE JAPANESE THINK YOU'RE NO FRIEND OF OURS.

THEN YOU'RE MY CONTACT?

I'M CHEN ZHEN. AGAINST THE JAPANESE, I'M EVERYONE'S CONTACT.

AWFULLY PUBLIC VENUE, ISN'T IT?

IT IS. THE IMPERIAL ARMY THINKS THEY GET VALUABLE INFORMATION BY KEEPING AN EYE ON US, SO THEY NEVER RAID THE CLUB.

MEANWHILE WE KEEP OUR REAL OPERATIONS OUT OF THEIR SIGHT.

OF COURSE, TO MAINTAIN THE CHARADE, WE HAVE TO LET THEM FIND SOMETHING EVERY SO OFTEN.

LIKE A FOREIGN AGENT.

AND HERE I THOUGHT WE WERE ON THE SAME SIDE.

ARE WE?

YOU TELL ME. I'M HERE TO DESTROY THE JAPANESE TELEFORCE WEAPON.

YES, AS A PRETEXT FOR FINDING DOCTOR LU SO HE CAN BUILD ONE FOR YOUR GOVERNMENT.

THAT HADN'T OCCURRED TO YOU?

ROBO, WE'RE FIGHTING A WAR, BUT OUR LEADERS ARE FIGHTING THE NEXT ONE. YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO BE NAIVE.

YEAH, WELL, I'M NEW TO THIS STUFF. ALL I KNOW IS THAT ZERO-POINT ENERGY IS THEORETICALLY **LIMITLESS.**

IF DOCTOR LU'S THEORIES WORK OUT, THEN IT'S NOT A **WEAPON,** IT'S A **DOOMSDAY** DEVICE. IT COULD CRACK THE **PLANET** IN HALF.

I NEED **YOUR** SPY NETWORK TO HELP ME SHUT IT DOWN AND RESCUE LU SO THAT **DOESN'T** HAPPEN.

I DON'T CARE **WHAT** WE DO WITH HIM FROM THERE. YOU CAN MAKE HIM **DISAPPEAR.** I'LL TELL MY SUPERIORS HE **DIED.**

WHATEVER IT TAKES TO KEEP HIS IDEAS FROM SPREADING.

WHAT'S TO STOP **ME** FROM TURNING HIM IN TO **MY** GOVERNMENT?

I'M JUST A NAIVE **MORON,** BUT **I** DON'T TRUST **ANY** NATION WITH THAT KIND OF POWER.

DO YOU?

NO. I DON'T. BUT YOU ***ARE*** NAIVE. YOU SHOULDN'T TRUST ME YET.

WELL, START EARNING MY TRUST THEN.

OKAY. LET'S GO TO THE KITCHEN.

YOU SHOULD MEET ITS ***NERVE CENTER.***

SHANGHAI IS THE ***HEART*** OF THE RESISTANCE. I'M ITS ***FACE.***

IMPRESSIVE SET UP.

WE HAVE STATIONS LIKE THIS IN ***EVERY*** OCCUPIED CITY. FROM HERE WE COORDINATE THE RESISTANCE ***AND*** GATHER INTEL ***ALL*** ACROSS CHINA.

***THAT'S*** HOW WE LEARNED ABOUT THIS RESEARCH PROJECT IN MANCHUKUO FOR "SPECIAL GUN NUMBER TWO."

ROBO, MEET--

HELEN?!

ROBO?!

YOU KNOW EACH OTHER?

YEAH, WE USED TO--

***KNOW*** EACH OTHER. FROM YEARS BACK.

UH. OKAY.

WHAT ARE YOU *DOING* HERE?

*WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?*

TIBET. ZEN MARKS-MANSHIP. JAPANESE INVASION. STUCK IN SHANGHAI.

DIDN'T TAKE LONG TO COME ACROSS THE RESISTANCE. *AND* ZHEN.

AND HERE WE ARE.

*OH. I SEE.*

CHENAULT SENT ROBO TO HELP US GET DOCTOR LU AND HIS ZERO-POINT ENERGY WEAPON. GIVE HIM THE BRIEF.

THE GOOD NEWS IS, WE THINK WE KNOW WHERE HE IS. THEY'VE SENT A ***DOZEN*** QUANTUM MEN TO THIS ONE REMOTE RESEARCH STATION.

***AND*** THEY'VE BEEN REQUISITIONING ALL ***KINDS*** OF BIZARRE STUFF LIKE SELENIUM CORED GIRDERS AND MAGNESIUM-TUNGSTEN ALLOYS.

*REMEMBER EDISON'S ODIC MACHINE?*

OF COURSE. IT HARNESSED ***HIDDEN*** ENERGIES. UNTIL IT EXPLODED.

*MR. TESLA AND I EXAMINED THE REMAINS. IT HAD A **SELENIUM** CORE SUSPENDED IN A **MAGNESIUM-TUNGSTEN** CAGE.*

THAT'S ***TOO*** MUCH OF A COINCIDENCE TO ***BE*** A CO-INCIDENCE.

WHAT'S AN ODIC MACHINE?

EDISON THOUGHT IT WOULD COLLECT THIS MYSTERIOUS **ENERGY** HE DISCOVERED AND MAKE HIM **IMMORTAL.**

BUT, LIKE MR. TESLA SAYS, SCIENCE IS NOT AN **EXACT** SCIENCE.

MAYBE EDISON DISCOVERED DOCTOR LU'S ZERO-POINT ENERGY WITHOUT KNOWING IT.

THAT ***WOULD*** EXPLAIN THE ENORMOUS EXPLOSION.

YEAH. IF ZERO-POINT ENERGY IS EVEN A **FRACTION** AS ENERGETIC AS ODIC FORCE--

<MR. CHEN! IT'S A RAID!>

GET ROBO *OUT* OF HERE.

I'M NOT LEAVING *YOU!*

HELEN. I CAN'T TRUST ANYONE *ELSE.*

GET HIM TO DOCTOR LU.

WHAT ABOUT *YOU?*

I WON'T BE FAR BEHIND.

LIAR.

MMPH!

I SHOULD SEE YOU FOR THE LAST TIME MORE OFTEN.

*NOT* FUNNY.

*NO, THAT WAS A PRETTY GOOD LINE.*

BOP

C'MON.

IT'S A MAZE DOWN HERE. STAY CLOSE.

MANCHUKUO

<PICK HER UP.>

WHUD

KCHK

YEAH, YOU MIGHT GET *ME*. BUT ROBO'S *BULLETPROOF*.

UH.

ABOUT THAT.

OH.

OH, I SEE.

TNK

<SEARCH HER FOR WEAPONS.>
<YES, LIEUTENANT.>
<AND KEEP AT LEAST *THREE* GUNS POINTED AT HER AT ALL TIMES.>
ATOMIC ROBO.
AND YOU ARE?
LIEUTENANT MATSUDA ICHIRO.
NOT MANY FOLKS CAN DO WHAT YOU DID BACK THERE.
NOT YET, NO.
WHO THOUGHT IT WAS A GOOD IDEA TO SEND THE MOST FAMOUS FACE IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD ON A ***SPY*** MISSION?
MS. MCALLISTER? SHE'S A MILLIONAIRE SOCIALITE. ***AND*** AN ADVENTURER IN HER OWN RIGHT. I CAN'T ACCOUNT FOR EVERYONE SHE'S MET.
AH. WELL, I'M NOT A SPY. I'M AN ***ADVENTURER.*** EVERYONE KNOWS THAT.
THEN IT IS ONLY ***COINCIDENCE*** THAT YOU ARE "ADVENTURING" WITH ONE OF CHEN ZHEN'S INNER CIRCLE?

WE TRACKED YOU *BOTH* FROM THE RESISTANCE IN *SHANGHAI* TO *BEIJING* TO OUR REMOTE AND *VERY* SECRET MANCHUKUO RESEARCH FACILITY.

*ALL* COINCIDENCE?

MUST BE.

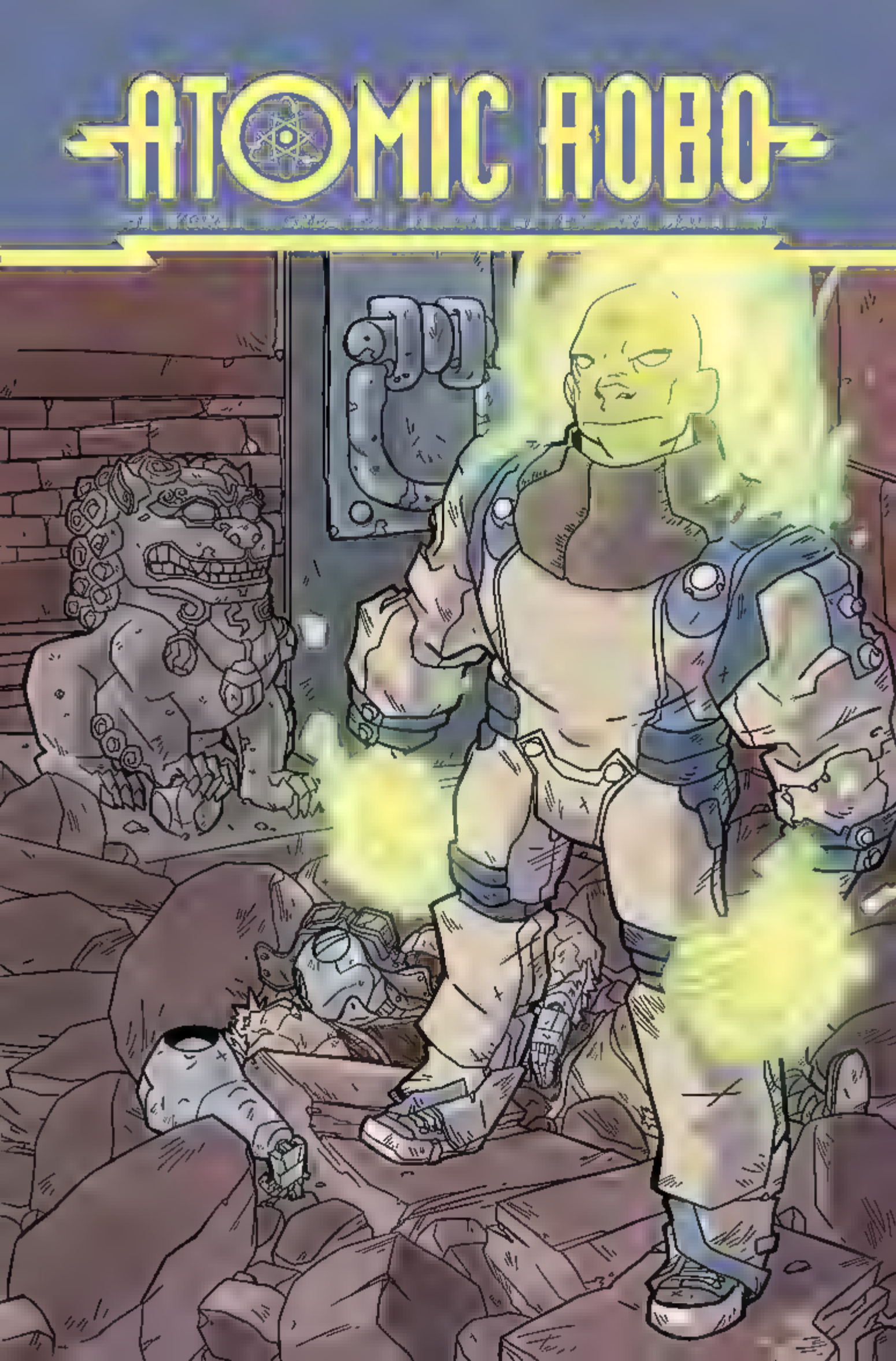
AND YOU PROBABLY SHOULDN'T *ADMIT* THE FACILITY IS *REAL* IF IT'S A *SECRET.*

IS HE *ALWAYS* THIS INANE?

HEY! I JUST REALIZED WE HAVE THE *SAME* BARBER!

I *WAS* FEELING BAD ABOUT DISSECTING YOU. THANK YOU FOR FIXING THAT.

<RADIO HEADQUARTERS. TELL THEM WE HAVE THE SPIES.>


ATOMIC ROBO

SIHANG WAREHOUSE, SHANGHAI
OCTOBER 28, 1937

<THEY SAID THE INVADERS *COULDN'T* BE STOPPED.>

<UNTIL *WE* STOPPED THEM.>

LT. COL. XIE JINYUAN

<DONE YET?>

CHEN ZHEN

<ALMOST.>

HELEN "THE NIGHTINGALE" McALLISTER

ACROSS FROM SIHANG WAREHOUSE

<HOW *ALMOST* ARE WE TALKING?>

<I DON'T NEED TO REMIND YOU THERE'S BOUND TO BE *MORE* ON THE WAY.>

<I'D BE GOING FASTER IF *YOU* WEREN'T MAKING SUCH A *RACKET.*>

<YOU'VE GOT MORE *FRIENDS,* BY THE WAY.>

<I'LL TRY TO KEEP THE NOISE DOWN.>

<DO YOU KNOW WHAT THEY'RE CALLING US? THE EIGHT HUNDRED *HEROES.*>

HyHUK!

FWACK!

<*WE* ARE SHANGHAI'S FINAL HOPE.>

<CAREFUL, CHEN!>

<I GOT IT.>

AUGH!

<THREE'S TOO MANY!>

<AND SHANGHAI IS *CHINA'S* FINAL HOPE.>

<WON'T BE *THREE* OF THEM FOR LONG.>

CHCHAK

?

OH.

<HOW CAN WE REPEL THE INVADERS WHEN WE CAN'T EVEN KEEP THE LIGHTS ON?>

<THE BREAKER'S ARE FIXED.>

<AND I *TOLD* YOU THREE WAS TOO MANY.>

<GOOD THING I BROUGHT HELP.>

<EVERY HOUR WE RESIST THE INVADERS IS AN HOUR CLOSER TO *VICTORY.*>

MANCHUKUO, 1938

SO.

YOU AND CHEN.

ME AND CHEN. DO YOU LIKE HIM?

ME? DO YOU LIKE HIM?

YEAH. A LOT.

HE SEEMS NICE.

HE IS.

THINK THERE'S A FUTURE THERE?

COULD BE. SHANGHAI'S FULL OF COUPLES LIKE US.

YOU'LL STAY THERE?

MAYBE. I DON'T KNOW.

IS THIS WEIRD? FOR US, I MEAN. TALKING ABOUT HIM.

MAYBE. BUT WE WERE ALWAYS A LITTLE WEIRD.

A LITTLE VERY WEIRD.

YEAH. WE WERE GREAT, BUT...WEIRD.

I'M GLAD YOU FOUND SOMEONE YOU CAN HAVE A FUTURE WITH.

THAT'S ASSUMING I'VE GOT A FUTURE AT ALL.

WHAT, THIS? DON'T WORRY.

THEY CAN'T KILL YOU. IF THEY DO, THERE'S NOTHING HOLDING ME BACK.

THAT'S NOT EXACTLY A RELIEF.

I SUPPOSE NOT.

BUT THIS IS THE PART OF THE PLAN WHERE WE WAIT FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE OUR MOVE.

PROBABLY A BIT OPTIMISTIC TO CALL WHAT'S HAPPENING RIGHT NOW A PLAN.

LIKE HOW DID MATSUDA KNOCK YOU AROUND LIKE THAT?



WELL. IT DEFINITELY HAS TO DO WITH THAT.

<NEVER SEEN LIGHTNING LIKE *THAT.*>

<*IS* IT LIGHTNING?>

<SO, WHAT'S THE PLAY HERE? WE *DOIN'* THIS?>

<WE *HAVE* TO.>

<THE HELL WE DO. WE'RE THE *GHOST BANDITS,* NOT THE *CHIVALRY GANG.*>

<WE FOLLOWED THE WOMAN AND HER ROBOT. NOW ALL WE *HAVE* TO DO IS TELL CHEN'S PEOPLE WE FOUND THE BASE THEY'RE LOOKING FOR.>

<IF CHEN WANTS IT SO BAD, HE CAN GET HIS *OWN* HANDS DIRTY FOR A CHANGE.>

<SEE, THAT'S WHY *YOU* AREN'T THE LEADER OF THIS OUTFIT. THIS ONE RAID CAN SCORE US *THREE* FORTUNES.>

<THINK IT THROUGH. *THAT* IS A TOP SECRET MILITARY RESEARCH STATION. *WHATEVER* THEY'RE DOING IN THERE IS WORTH *MILLIONS.*>

<IF *WE* CAN TAKE IT, CHEN WILL HAVE TO PAY US *WHATEVER WE ASK* TO GET AT IT. *BUT* WE'LL *ALSO* RANSOM IT *BACK* TO THE JAPANESE.>

<AND *THEY'LL* KILL *EACH OTHER* FIGHTING OVER IT! BUT WHAT'S THE *THIRD* FORTUNE?>

<WHEN THE DUST SETTLES WE *KILL* THE WINNER AND SELL OUT TO WHOEVER COMES *NEXT.* RUSSIANS PROBABLY.>

<*ONE* RAID. *THREE* FORTUNES.>

<WE *HAVE* TO DO THIS!>

WHERE DO YOU THINK THEY'RE KEEPING DOCTOR LU?

WHAT WE'RE *SEEING* IS A MILITARY BASE. BUT WE KNOW IT'S A RESEARCH STATION. THAT PART'S PROBABLY UNDER-GROUND.

THAT'S WHERE HE'LL BE.

SILENCE.

<YOU THERE. THE WOMAN IS WITH THE RESISTANCE. PREPARE AN INTERROGATION ROOM.>

<AS FOR ATOMIC ROBO...>

WHAT *ARE* WE TO DO WITH YOU?

*SHOULD'VE THOUGHT OF THAT BEFORE YOU* ***CAPTURED*** *ME.*

YOU'RE DETERMINED TO BE A ***NUISANCE,*** AREN'T YOU.

*HEY. STOP BUILDING* ***DOOMS-DAY*** *WEAPONS AND I'LL LAY OFF.*

IS ***THAT*** WHAT YOU THINK WE'RE DOING HERE?

KRAKOOM

FOR SOME ***CRAZY*** REASON, YES.

THAT? HARMLESS.

A MERE BY-PRODUCT OF OUR WORK.

WE ARE EXPLORING THE MEREST SCRAP OF WHAT CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED WITH DOCTOR LU'S THEORIES.

IN TIME, WE WILL UNLOCK ULTIMATE POWER OVER THE FABRIC OF THE UNIVERSE.

Y'KNOW. I BLEW UP THE LAST TWO GUYS WHO TALKED TO ME LIKE THAT.

TWO? GOSH, I'M FALLING BEHIND.

MATSUDA HERE MIGHT BE YOUR CHANCE TO CATCH UP.

AND HOW DO YOU PROPOSE TO DO THAT FROM CAPTIVITY?

BOOM

BKOOM

BANG

<DIRECT HIT!>

CREEEAAAK

FWAK

CHANK

<TAKE THEM TO THE CELLS. I WILL DEAL WITH THESE-->

FWAM

UH. ROBO?

SKROOOM

BAFOOOM

CHKA CHAKA

VROOOM

CHATTA CHATTA

BANG

BKOW

<SECURE THE LABS!>

<PUSH THEM BACK!>

SKRONCH

HEY. WE'RE ALIVE.

YES, BUT ONE OF US NEEDS TO BREATHE.

I MIGHT HAVE SOME GOOD NEWS ABOUT THAT.

DO TELL.

MY HAND'S FREE.

WELL. THAT BOUGHT US A FEW MINUTES.

GOTTA SAY, THIS DOESN'T LOOK LIKE A LAB.

YEAH, MUST BE SOME KINDA STORAGE BASEMENT. IT COULD TAKE US HOURS TO FIND DOCTOR LU.

OR, UH, A FEW SECONDS.

KRAKBOOOM

ARGH!

<GOT 'EM!>

DAKKA DAKKA

BLAM BLAM

<ONE RAID!>

<THREE FORTUNES!>

BLAM!

<THEIR *VEHICLES!* AIM FOR THEIR *VEHICLES!*>

<HUNGER HAS MADE BOLD *WOLVES* OUT OF OUR WASTELAND *DOGS.*>

<SLAUGHTER THEM.>

<WE NEED ONLY SLOW THEM DOWN.>

HKK--!

VRMMMM

CHAKKA

THWAK

THUD

FWAM

ARGH!

CRUNCH

MY BONES!

WE'RE THE GOOD GUYS.

HONEST. THEY *MADE* US DO THAT.

IS THIS A RESCUE?

YES IT IS, SIR.

SHF

WELL, IT *WAS* A RESCUE.

VWUMMM

<WE WILL TAKE THE DOCTOR.>

<BUT, BY ALL MEANS, *PLEASE* FIGHT BACK.>

GET DOCTOR LU OUT OF HERE.

WHAT ABOUT YOU?

I'LL HOLD THEM OFF.

UH. I HOPE.

<"ONE RAID, THREE FORTUNES." THAT'S A RALLYING CRY.>

<NEVER SEEN OUR MEN FIGHT SO HARD.>

<THE HELL IS THAT?!>

DAKKA DAKKA

WHOM

BKOW

<STOP!>

BLOOM

HMPHF

BRATTA TATTA TAT

<WELL, THIS IS UNEXPECTED.>

KOOM

<I WISH YOU SPOKE OUR LANGUAGE.>

<I WOULD TELL YOU IT DOESN'T EVEN *HURT* WHEN YOU HIT US.>

DUNNO *WHAT* YOU'RE SAYING, BUT I'M *SURE* IT'S CLEVER.

OKAY. THE OD MAKES YOU HIT LIKE *HOWITZERS.*

KOOM

WOM

BUT MAYBE...

*AND* MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE TO HIT *BACK.*

...I CAN *TRICK* YOU.

KRKKROOM

AIIEEE!

<WE'RE OUTGUNNED!>

<DON'T WORRY. WE'RE SURROUNDED TOO.>

<YOU'RE A REAL HELP.>

<THERE, UP THE STAIRS!>

<I SEE 'EM!>

CHAKKA DAKKA CHATTA

AUGH!

BKOW

BLAM BLAM

BRAKKA DAK

HMMM.

CHAKKA CHAKKA

<WHERE ARE OUR DAMN TANKS?>

MEANWHILE, DOCTOR LU IS ALMOST RESCUED...

WHAT IF ONE OF THEM GETS *LOOSE?*

SHOOT 'IM.

I NEVER *SHOT* A GUN BEFORE.

YEAH, BUT *THEY* DON'T KNOW THAT.

BRUMMM

*THERE* WE GO. HOP IN, DOC.

WE HAVE TO GO *BACK!*

DON'T WORRY, NOW THAT *YOU'RE* RESCUED, WE CAN HEAD BACK AND RESCUE *ROBO* TOO.

NO, NO--THE *LABORATORY!*

WE MAY AS WELL SURRENDER *NOW* IF WE DON'T *DESTROY* IT.

DOC, *TRUST* ME. YOU WANT SOMETHING *DESTROYED,* YOU WANT *ROBO.*

SKREEE

YOU'RE NEXT, CHUCKLES!

WOMP

VAM

SHOULDN'T THIS BE ENOUGH PRESSURE TO SNAP YOUR SPINE LIKE A TWIG?

THIS IS WHY I HATE SCI-FI WIZARDS.

VRMMMM

FWAZZAM

FWUMP

AND *THAT* DOCTOR LU, IS HOW YOU DO A RESCUE.

HE SHRUGGED IT OFF LIKE IT WAS *NOTHING* WHEN I HIT HIM.

WHERE YOU HEADED, STRANGER? GOT ROOM IN THE BACK FOR ONE MORE.

THINK THIS THING CAN GET US BACK TO THE RENDEZVOUS AT GHOST CITY?

WHERE IS THAT? NO. WE *MUST* TURN AROUND.

THERE WILL BE *HUNDREDS* OF SOLDIERS LIKE HIM, *THOUSANDS*, IF WE DON'T DESTROY THE LAB *NOW!*

WE CAN WORRY ABOUT THAT *AFTER* WE GET YOU TO SAFETY, DOC.

<ONE OF THEM WEIRDOS IS BLOCKIN' THE WAY OUT!>

<NOT FOR LONG!>

CHATTA CHATTA

KRUNCH

<WE'RE LOSING TOO MANY TRUCKS. ALSO MY HAT.>

<RETREAT!>

HEY, LOOK WHAT I FOUND. THE *OUTDOORS.*

VRMMM

AND JUST IN TIME, TOO.

<RETREAT! SPREAD THE WORD!>

CHAKKA CHAKKA

<DO *NOT* GIVE PURSUIT! *SECURE* THE FORTRESS!>

<PUT OUT THOSE FIRES!>

<GATHER THE WOUNDED!>

<I WANT ENGINEERS WORKING ON THIS *NOW.*>

<THE REACTOR COULD *OVERLOAD* WITHOUT IT.>

<LIEUTENANT! THE PRISONERS! THEY-->

"--THEY GOT AWAY."

<*FIND THEM.*>

ATOMIC ROBO
THE WORLD'S GREATEST SCIENCE ADVENTURE MAGAZINE!

BEIJING UNIVERSITY
JULY, 1937

<WHERE IS IT?>

<WHERE IS IT!>

<WHAT IS IT?>

<EQUATIONS, OF COURSE>

<DOCTOR LU, YOU'RE A *PHYSICIST*. THAT DOESN'T NARROW IT DOWN.>

<FOUND IT!>

<IS THAT EVERY-THING?>

SHF

<THERE'S A *FEW* NOTES LEFT, BUT THEY'RE USELESS WITHOUT A *ROBUST* UNDER-STANDING OF HYPERGEOMETIC RELATIVITY.>

<WHICH THEY WOULD ONLY HAVE WITH *MY* BRAIN OR *THESE* PAPERS.>

<GREAT. NOW ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS GET *YOU* AND THOSE *PAPERS* OUT OF THIS *WARZONE*.>

<CHEN ZHEN. SURELY YOU DON'T BELIEVE THE JAPANESE WILL ATTACK THE *UNIVERSITY*.>

<UNLESS THEY HAVE A CURIOUS TRADITION OF SIGHTSEEING FROM *TANKS*, THEN THEY ALREADY HAVE.>

<WHO WOULD WAGE *WAR* OVER A BIT OF *MATH*?>

<THEY'LL ATTACK *ANYTHING* TO GET YOUR ZERO-POINT ENERGY THEORY.>

<READY TO RUN, DOC?>

<WON'T THAT LOOK SUSPICIOUS?>

<VERY. SO WE'LL HAVE TO GO FAST.>

D'AH!

<THAT HIM?>

<CLOSE ENOUGH.>

<DOCTOR LU!>

<RUN!>

<HALT!>

MANCHUKUO, 1938

<EVERY-THING BUT THE HYPERFIELD TOWER WILL BE REPAIRED BY TOMORROW AFTERNOON, LIEUTENANT.>

<THEY MIGHT HAVE CAUSED SOME ***SERIOUS*** DAMAGE HAD IT BEEN A ***COORDINATED*** MILITARY EFFORT.>

<THE TOWER IS ***CRITICAL.***>

<WE CAN'T MAINTAIN ADEQUATE ZERO-POINT ENERGY LEVELS WITHOUT IT.>

<IT WILL TAKE WEEKS.>

<***BUT*** IF WE DECIDE SAFETY IS NOT A ***CURRENT*** PRIORITY, IT CAN BE DONE BY ***NIGHTFALL.***>

<LIEUTENANT! ***LIEUTENANT!***>

<HMM. GHOST CITY? YOU'RE ***CERTAIN?***>

<YES, SIR. THERE ARE GHOST BANDITS ***EVERYWHERE.***>

<DO ***NOT*** ENGAGE. REPORT ***ANY*** NEW ACTIVITY.>

<THE GHOST BANDITS ***MUST*** BE IN LEAGUE WITH THE RESISTANCE. THEIR ATTACK WAS COORDINATED TO RECLAIM DOCTOR LU.>

<TO ***HELL*** WITH SAFETY. GET OUR ZERO-POINT REACTOR WORKING BY ***ANY*** MEANS NECESSARY. WE WILL NOT FAIL THE EMPEROR.>

GHOST CITY

SO, WE'RE **SURE** THESE "GHOST BANDITS" ARE ON **OUR** SIDE?

THEY HATE THE **JAPANESE** OCCUPATION ENOUGH TO **COOPERATE** WITH THE **CHINESE** RESISTANCE.

**BUT** CHEN SAYS HAVING THEIR COOPERATION **ISN'T** THE SAME AS HAVING THEIR **LOYALTY.**

RIGHT.

ENEMY OF MY ENEMY.

KNOCK

MATSUDA UNLOCKED **INCALCULABLE** POWER.

THERE'S A **LOT** OF THAT GOING AROUND THESE DAYS.

WE **MUST** GO BACK AND PUT AN **END** TO IT.

WE **WILL,** DOC. WE HAD TO GET YOU OUT OF THERE FIRST.

YOU WILL NEED **MY** HELP TO MAKE SURE IT'S DONE **PROPERLY.** NO ONE KNOWS MORE ABOUT HYPERFIELD QUANTUM MECHANICS.

AND THAT'S WHY WE'RE GETTING YOU OUT OF THERE. WE CAN'T RISK YOU FALLING INTO ENEMY HANDS AGAIN.

DON'T WORRY, DOCTOR LU. THIS ISN'T OUR FIRST TIME DEALING WITH ODIC ENERGY.

WHAT IS THIS ODIC?

AN ENERGY FIELD UNDERLYING ALL LIFE. MAYBE REALITY ITSELF. EDISON THOUGHT IT'D MAKE HIM IMMORTAL.

IMMORTALITY.

HADN'T CONSIDERED THAT.

<WE LOST GOOD MEN ON THAT RAID! ALSO MY HAT.>

<AND FOR WHAT!>

<FOR THIS?>

<WE CAN'T EVEN SELL HIM!>

<I MEAN. WE CAN, THOUGH.>

<HAHA!>

<SHUT UP.>

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

THE GHOST BANDITS ARE EXTORTING US.

<IT'S *YOUR* FIGHT, BUT *WE'RE* THE ONE'S SUFFERING FOR IT!>

<THE RESISTANCE SHOULD *PAY* FOR OUR LOSSES!>

<*PLUS* THE FINDER'S FEE. *AND* EXFILTRATION. *AND* ROOM AND BOARD. *AND* AROUND THE CLOCK PROTECTION.>

<ARE YA DONE?>

<THE OCCUPATION'S WORSE FOR *YOU* THAN ANYBODY BECAUSE *NOW* WHAT PASSES FOR *LAW* OUT HERE HAS *TANKS.*>

<SO, IF IT'S *ANYTHING,* IT'S THE *RESISTANCE* THAT'S HELPING *YOU.*>

<WELL. YOU *STILL* OWE US FOR THROWING OUR GUYS AGAINST THOSE SPOOKY WEIRD POWERS.>

<WHAT SPOOKY WEIRD POWERS?>

ZHEN!

SORRY IT TOOK SO LONG TO CATCH UP.

I KNEW YOU'D MAKE IT.

LIAR.

GLAD YOU COULD JOIN US, CHEN.

SOUNDS LIKE I'M JUST IN TIME TOO. WHAT'S THIS BUSINESS ABOUT SPOOKY POWERS?

MATSUDA PRODUCED A ***WORKING*** HYPERFIELD ENGINE.

<SO SOON? ***HOW?!***>

<MATSUDA IS JAPAN'S TOP MAN IN QUANTUM MECHANICS. HE HAS MY PAPERS ON THE ZERO-POINT, IT WAS INEVITABLE.>

<HIS SOLDIERS ARE IMBUED WITH ***LIMITLESS*** ENERGY.>

<***WE*** KNOW HOW TO FIGHT 'EM.>

<BUT IT AIN'T FREE.>

<YOU'RE LUCKY. WE'RE RUNNING A DISCOUNT ON SPECIAL INTELLIGENCE THIS WEEK.>

ARE THEY BEING HELPFUL? THEY ***SEEM*** LIKE THEY'RE BEING HELPFUL.

<THAT'S YOUR BIG STRATEGY?>

HANG ON. WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE? WHY ARE WE UPSET?

THEY SAID TO HIT THEM FROM *BEHIND.*

<IT WORKS.>

<PROBABLY IT WORKS.>

<PAY.>

THEY'RE WASTING OUR TIME.

*NO,* WAIT. THEY'RE *RIGHT.*

THOSE GUYS TOOK *EVERY* PUNCH I HAD LIKE IT WAS *NOTHING,* BUT *HELEN* TOOK ONE OUT WITH A SINGLE HIT.

YEAH, WITH *A CAR,* ROBO.

MY PUNCHES ARE *LIKE* GETTING HIT BY A CAR. THE DIFFERENCE IS, HE DIDN'T SEE YOU COMING AT HIM.

I THINK THEIR ZERO-POINT ENERGY IS *USELESS* WITHOUT *INTENT* TO GUIDE IT.

<SO, SURPRISE ATTACKS, EH?>

<WORKS EVERY TIME.>

<MOST TIMES, PROBABLY.>

<BOSS! THE DAMN *RUSSIANS* ARE HERE!>

THE RUSSIANS!

WHAT'RE *THEY* DOING HERE?

<THEY SHOW UP ALL THE TIME.>

<THEY ONLY WANT TO DRINK AND GAMBLE AND BE A *NUISANCE* BECAUSE THEY'RE *RUSSIAN.*>

<WE HAVE TO HIDE YOU.>

<WE'LL ADD IT TO YOUR BILL.>

*DO WE TRUST THESE GUYS?*

THEY CAN'T KEEP BILLING US IF WE'RE *DEAD.*

WHY IS *NO ONE* GOOD AT ASSURANCES IN THIS GROUP?

HOW ABOUT THIS FOR ASSURANCE? I'LL STAY BEHIND SO WE'VE GOT SOMEONE KEEPING AN EYE ON THINGS.

JUST BE CAREFUL.

HEY. I'M *ALWAYS* CAREFUL.

LIAR.

THAT EVENING...

NO, NO. IT WASN'T UNTIL THE 1927 SOLVAY CONFERENCE.

YOU WERE THERE, DOCTOR LU?

OF COURSE I WAS THERE! I WAS CHINA'S LEADING EXPERT IN THE NEW THEORIES OF QUANTUM MECHANICS.

I STILL AM.

DIDN'T EINSTEIN ATTEND?

OH, YES. AND BOHR, AND PLANCK, AND CURIE. QUITE A GATHERING OF GENIUS. THERE WAS A PICTURE IN MY OFFICE.

I SUPPOSE THE JAPANESE HAVE IT NOW.

AND THAT'S WHERE YOU THOUGHT OF ZERO-POINT ENERGY?

NOT QUITE. I WAS WORKING ON THE OBSERVATION PROBLEM.

THERE WAS A GREAT DEAL OF DEBATE ABOUT IT AT THE CONFERENCE, YOU UNDERSTAND.

OUR EXPERIMENTS SHOWED QUANTUM EFFECTS WERE ALTERED SIMPLY BY OBSERVING THEM.

AND THAT IS PRECISELY THE PROBLEM, ISN'T IT.

HOW COULD MATTER OR ENERGY "KNOW" WHEN IT IS OBSERVED?

MY THINKING WENT LIKE THIS.

CONSCIOUSNESS IS A PROPERTY OF THE ***BRAIN.*** THE BRAIN IS ***MATTER*** AND ***ENERGY.***

EINSTEIN'S MODEL DESCRIBES MATTER AND ENERGY AS SPACETIME. AS ***GEOMETRY.***

THEREFORE, ***CONSCIOUSNESS*** CAN BE SEEN AS A PHENOMENON OF A SUFFICIENTLY COMPLEX SPACETIME MATRIX. A ***HYPERFIELD.***

AS SUCH, MENTAL STATES, THE SELF, PERCEPTION, EVEN ***KNOWLEDGE,*** OUGHT TO BE SUBJECT TO PHYSICAL LAWS.

I SPENT TEN YEARS MAPPING A HYPERGEOMETRIC MODEL OF THE MIND TO EXPLAIN HOW PHYSICAL LAWS MIGHT BE SUBJECT TO CONSCIOUSNESS.

IN THEORY, A PROPERLY AUGMENTED ***HYPERFIELD*** COULD ALLOW A MIND TO CONSCIOUSLY ***INFLUENCE*** REALITY RATHER THAN MERELY ***PERCEIVE*** IT.

DUNNO IF WE CAN STILL CALL THAT ***THEORETICAL,*** DOC.

*SO, MATSUDA'S USING HYPERFIELDS TO CREATE LIMITLESS ENERGY JUST BY **THINKING** ABOUT IT?*

NO. HYPERFIELDS DO NOT CREATE. THEY ***BORROW*** FROM THE LOWEST ENERGY STATE OF THE UNIVERSE. WHAT WE CALL THE ***ZERO-POINT.***

CLASSICAL PHYSICS ***ASSUMES*** THIS TO BE ***ZERO*** ENERGY. THERE OUGHT TO BE NOTHING TO BORROW. YES?

BUT QUANTUM MECHANICS SUGGESTS THE ZERO-POINT IS ***ACTUALLY*** A VAST ***OCEAN*** OF ENERGY PROPPING UP THE UNIVERSE ITSELF.

GUESS MATSUDA PROVED THAT ONE RIGHT.

YES. IT'S QUITE A VICTORY FOR QUANTUM MECHANICS. BUT IT ALSO TURNED MY LIFE'S WORK INTO A ***WEAPON.***

Y'KNOW, I'M MORE ***ENGINEER*** THAN ***PHYSICIST,*** BUT IT OCCURS TO ME THAT ***MATH*** IS ***MATH.*** RIGHT?

IF YOU MADE A SUPERPOWER ***EQUATION,*** THERE'S GOT TO BE ANOTHER ONE TO CANCEL IT OUT.

I SUPPOSE THERE IS.

*THAT COULD TAKE **YEARS** TO FIGURE OUT. WE'VE GOT TO STOP MATSUDA **NOW.***

OUR RUSSIANS ARE BEGINNING TO WIND DOWN. ***MOSTLY*** BY PASSING OUT.

SO, HERE'S THE PLAN.

MATSUDA HAS ***TWO*** PRIORITIES. TO REPAIR THE DAMAGE WE DID AND TO FIND ***US.*** THE ***SOONER*** WE STRIKE, THE ***LESS*** PREPARED HE'LL BE FOR IT.

WE'LL HEAD OUT AS SOON AS THE RUSSIANS ARE OUT OF COMMISSION. SHOULD BE ANOTHER HOUR OR SO.

YOU TWO WILL TAKE DOCTOR LU BACK TO A RESISTANCE SAFE HOUSE WHILE I HEAD BACK WITH THE GHOST BANDITS TO ***DEMOLISH*** MATSUDA'S LAB.

*I DON'T LIKE IT.*

ME EITHER.

WELL, THAT MAKES ***THREE*** OF US. BUT WE DON'T HAVE A CHOICE.

MATSUDA'S ***BOUND*** TO HAVE SOME OF THOSE HYPERFIELD GOONS IN RESERVE.

***ROBO'S*** THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN GO ***TOE-TO-TOE*** WITH THEM.

***IF*** THERE ***ARE*** ANY. WHICH SEEMS UNLIKELY AFTER OUR RAID. THE ***REAL*** PROBLEM IS WE CAN JUST ***BARELY*** TRUST THE GHOST BANDITS.

THEY'RE ONLY WORKING WITH US BECAUSE THEY WANT THE JAPANESE OUT. BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN THEY REALLY WANT ***US*** TO BE HERE ***EITHER.***

IF THEY CAN GET RID OF ***BOTH,*** SO MUCH THE BETTER. AND, BELIEVE ME, THEY'RE THINKING ABOUT HOW ***RIGHT NOW.***

ROBO'S GOT ***NO*** CHANCE OF STAYING ON TOP OF THAT UNLESS HE LEARNED TO SPEAK ***MANCHURIAN*** WHILE I WAS OUT

*I ***DIDN'T.*** IF ANYONE'S WONDERING.*

SO, WE'RE BACK WHERE WE ***STARTED.*** YOU WITH THE GHOST BANDITS, ME AND ROBO WITH LU.

LIKE I SAID, I'M NOT HAPPY ABOUT IT EITHER.

JUST PROMISE ME YOU'LL BE SAFE.

ONLY IF YOU DO THE SAME.

OKAY.

OKAY.

LIARS.

<IT IS NEARLY SUNRISE>

<IT IS, SIR.>

<***YOU*** ASSURED ME OUR ZERO-POINT REACTOR WOULD BE ONLINE BY NOW.>

<THERE WERE ***SETBACKS,*** BUT IT WON'T BE MUCH LONGER. A FEW HOURS.>

<WHY DOES THE TIMELINE GET ***LONGER*** EVERY TIME YOU MENTION IT?>

<YOU KNOW BETTER THAN ANYONE HOW ***DELICATE*** THESE SYSTEMS ARE.>

<I DON'T NEED A ***LECTURE*** ON A DEVICE I ***DESIGNED.***>

<YOU KNOW WE CAN ONLY WORK ***SO*** FAST WITHOUT RISKING DAMAGE TO THEM.>

<AND OUR TECHNICIANS. AND, UH, LOCAL SPACETIME.>

<MORNING AT THE LATEST.>

<A FEW HOURS, YOU SAY?>

<REPORT FROM OUR SCOUTS, SIR.>

<MATSUDA. GO AHEAD.>

<RUSSIAN SOLDIERS ARE *STILL* HERE.>

<MAKING A *HELL* OF A RACKET TOO.>

<ARE THEY SEARCHING FOR DOCTOR LU?>

<WE HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE IT IS A **RECREATIONAL** VISIT, SIR.>

<OF COURSE IT IS.>

<RAISE THE ELITES. DIRECT THEM TO A FIRING POSITION UPON GHOST CITY.>

<SIR!>

THE ELITES

<WE CAN BE THERE IN TWO HOURS.>

<WE NEED THE ZERO-POINT ENERGY REACTOR ONLINE.>

<YOU HAVE *ONE* HOUR.>

SPARK

ONE HOUR LATER...

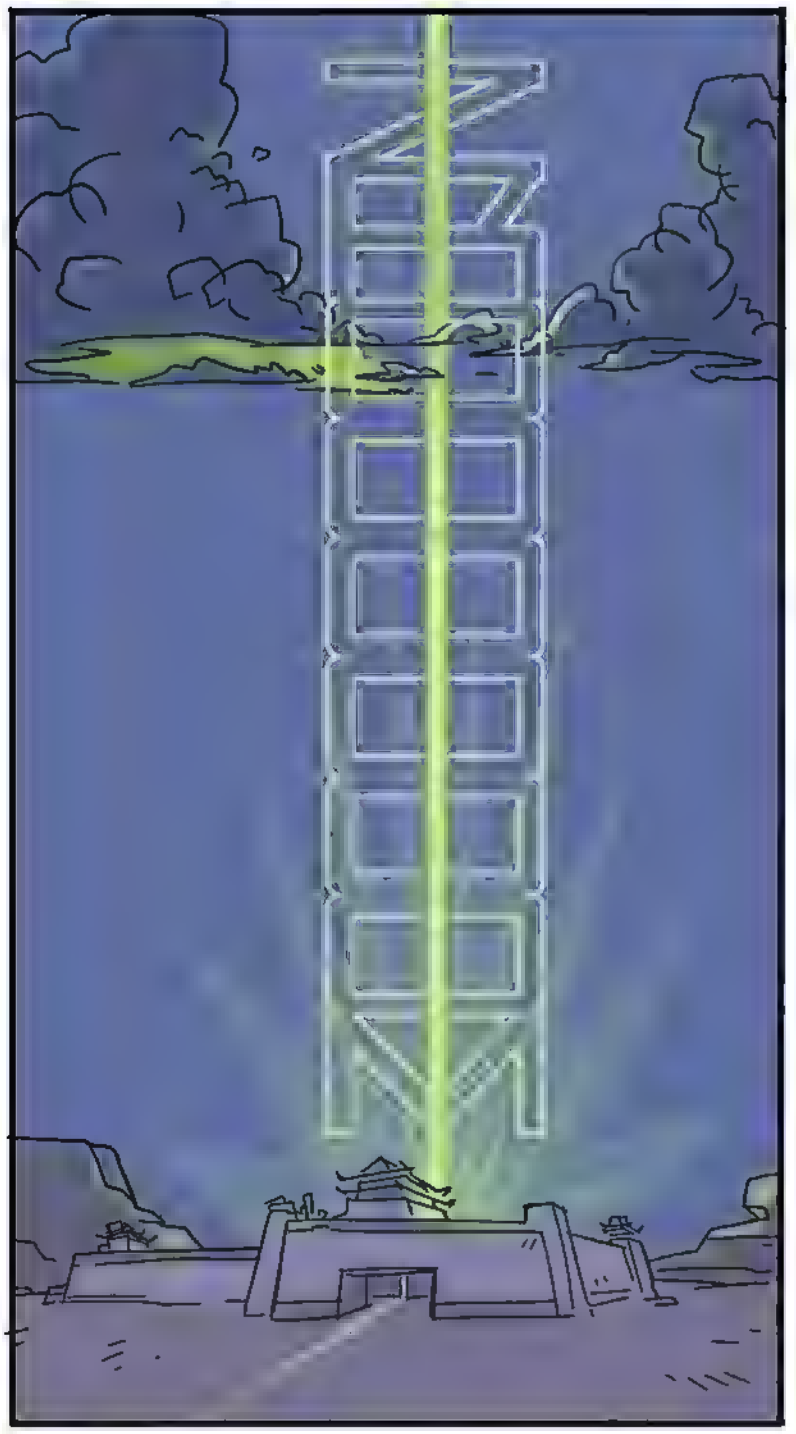
FINALLY.

WE *MUST* GO BACK AND *DESTROY* MATSUDA'S LABORATORY.

NO, WE MUST GET YOU OUT OF DANGER.

CHEN AND THE GHOST BANDITS CAN TAKE CARE OF THE LAB FOR US.

EASILY. MATSUDA'S GOT NO ADVANTAGE OVER US WITHOUT HIS REACTOR. AND HIS MEN ARE SPREAD THIN SCOURING THE BADLANDS FOR US.



EVEN SO. DON'T PLAY HERO.

BACK AT YOU.

<BEGIN THE ATTACK.>

BOOM

BA-THOOOM BA-THOOOM

<CEASE FIRE. MOVE IN.>

HEY, ZHEN. I THINK THEY FOUND US.

GET DOCTOR LU *OUT* OF HERE! WE CAN HANDLE THIS AS LONG AS--

--EXACTLY *THAT* DOESN'T HAPPEN.

I'M *NOT* LEAVING YOU IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS.

BUT DOCTOR LU!

YOU'RE **BOTH** TAKING HIM. **GO!**

ROBO!

C'MON, Y'MOOKS.

FWAM

I'M GIVING THAT ROBOT A ***STERN*** TALKING-TO IF WE ALL LIVE THROUGH THIS.

BIG "IF."

STRAP IN, DOC.

BOOM

BOOM

OKAY, YEAH. YOU'RE SUPER STRONG.

BUT SO AM I.

HANG ON!

VROOOOM

KRAKOOM

AUGH!

FWAM

THE SHELLING STOPPED. THEY MUST NOT WANT TO BLOW UP THEIR OWN PEOPLE.

THAT MEANS ROBO'S SAFE!

I WOULDN'T GO *THAT* FAR.

JUST GOTTA TAKE THEM BY SURPRISE!

WUMK

BUT

SHOULDA THOUGHT

HOW

BEFORE STARTING THE FIGHT.

KA-BOOM

YOU SAID THE SHELLING *STOPPED!*

IT *DID!* THEY'RE *PUNCHING* HIM.

WHyyYy.

<YOU WILL SEE HIM JUST *WEST* OF THE FORT. *FIRE.*>

GOT 'EM.

WHERE I WANT 'EM.

KA-BOOM

BA-BOOM

THEY.

THEY GOT ROBO.

I'M SORRY, HELEN. I DON'T...

HELEN?

HELEN!

BRAKES!

AAAAHHHH!!

# ATOMIC ROBO

THE WORLD'S GREATEST SCIENCE ADVENTURE MAGAZINE!

TOKYO IMPERIAL UNIVERSITY, 1928

<WHAT DID THEY *TEACH* YOU IN BERLIN, MR. MATSUDA?>

<QUANTUM MECHANICS, SIR.>

<WE ARE *QUITE* FAMILIAR WITH QUANTUM MECHANICAL THEORY, MR. MATSUDA.>

<FRANKLY, WE'D HAVE *WELCOMED* ITS APPEARANCE IN YOUR PAPER.>

<I AM THE FIRST TO ADMIT MY WORK IS *UNCONVENTIONAL.* EVEN BY THE *WILDLY* ECCENTRIC STANDARDS OF QUANTUM THEORY.>

<BUT I BELIEVE WE CAN LEARN MORE ABOUT THE COSMOS BY *INVESTIGATING* OUTLANDISH IDEAS THAN BY *REGURGITATING* ORTHODOXY.>

<A *MAVERICK* WE COULD TOLERATE. *NOT* A MADMAN.>

<DO NOT MAKE THIS BOARD REGRET ITS DECISION TODAY, *DOCTOR* MATSUDA.>

RIKEN INSTITUTE, 1932

<YOU WANTED TO SPEAK WITH ME, DOCTOR NISHINA?>

<DID YOU KNOW THE AMERICANS HAVE BUILT A PARTICLE ACCELERATOR? THE "CYCLOTRON."> 

<AMAZING.>

<IT IS.>

<DON'T YOU THINK WE SHOULD HAVE OUR OWN?>

<ABSOLUTELY. MY THEORIES WILL ***NEVER*** BE PROVEN WITHOUT ONE.>

<THERE ARE SOME WHO THINK ***NOTHING*** WILL PROVE ***YOUR*** THEORIES, MATSUDA.>

<NOT ***ME,*** OF COURSE. I ONLY CONSIDER YOUR THEORIES ***RIDICULOUS.***>

<THAT'S WHY I WANT YOU TO HELP DESIGN ***OUR*** CYCLOTRON. IT'S A RIDICULOUS PROJECT. IT WILL ***REQUIRE*** RIDICULOUS IDEAS.>

<IT'LL BE EXPENSIVE.>

<VASTLY.>

<WHO'S PAYING FOR IT?>

RIKEN INSTITUTE, 1935

<WHO ARE-->

<DOCTOR MATSUDA?>

<I'LL ASK THE QUESTIONS.>

<NO. YOU WON'T.>

<WE FEEL YOUR WORK IS ***WASTED*** ON NISHINA'S CYCLOTRON.>

<WHAT DO ***YOU*** KNOW OF MY WORK?>

<ANTI-GRAVITY. ELECTRIC ARTILLERY. TELE-TRANSPORTATION.>

<THE CYCLOTRON, ***IF*** IT WORKS, ***MAY*** DEMONSTRATE THAT ***PARTS*** OF YOUR THEORIES ***COULD*** BE FEASIBLE.>

<BUT THAT'S ***YEARS*** AWAY.>

<WHEREAS THE IMPERIAL NAVY'S ***CHOKAITEN PROJECT*** NEEDS YOU TODAY.>

MANCHUKUO, 1938

I DON'T SEE WHY THEY DON'T JUST *KILL* US.

OH, DON'T WORRY. THEY *WILL.*

BUT *FIRST* MATSUDA HAS TO LET US KNOW THERE'S NO *HURRY.*

IT'S PURE *EGO* IS WHAT IT IS.

SO *WE* KNOW *HE KNOWS* HE'S WON.

<QUIET!>

<DOES THAT APPLY TO *ME* AS WELL?>

<WE NEED THAT ONE.>

<WHAT HAS HE DONE...?>

MISS MCALLISTER, DOCTOR LU. WELCOME BACK.

YOU BROUGHT A ***FRIEND?*** I BELIEVE WE CAN FIND SOME ROOM FOR HIM.

OH, QUIT ***GLOATING.***

YOUR RESISTANCE IS ***DESTROYED,*** AND WITH DOCTOR LU ***CAPTURED,*** ONLY ***WE*** WILL POSSESS THE SECRET OF ZERO-POINT ENERGY WEAPONS.

I'M NOT ***GLOATING.*** I ***WON.***

WHAT IS THIS LIGHT? WHAT HAVE YOU ***DONE?***

HYPERFIELD LEAKAGE CRYSTALLIZING LOCAL SPACETIME.

AND YOU WILL HELP US FIX IT BEFORE IT BECOMES ***HAZARDOUS.***

GHOST CITY

THE HELL HIT ME.

KUNK KUNK

<WE LOST OUR HOME!>

<ONE OF 'EM, ANYWAY.>

<WE LOST GOOD MEN.>

<SOME OF 'EM, ANYWAY.>

<DO YOU THINK HE SPEAKS ANYTHING LIKE A NORMAL LANGUAGE?>

<MANCHU? JAPANESE? MONGOLIAN? KOREAN? MANDARIN?>

UM. I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SAYING?

<WHAT'S HE SAYING?>

<DAMN FOREIGNERS. ANYONE STILL ***ALIVE*** SPEAK ENGLISH?>

YEAH, YEAH. HOWDY OKAY.

<WHAT WAS THAT?>

<TRADITIONAL AMERICAN GREETING.>

<WHEN'D YOU LEARN ENGLISH?>

<I HAVE HIDDEN DEPTHS.>

<AND YOU NEVER THOUGHT TO ***TELL*** US?!>

<WOULDN'T BE ***HIDDEN*** THEN, WOULD IT?>

THE WAY I FIGURE IT, MATSUDA'S OUR ***REAL*** ENEMY.

AND ***NEITHER*** OF US GET WHAT WE WANT IF WE FIGHT EACH OTHER ***INSTEAD.***

<HE'S ***BROKE,*** BUT HE HAS A PLAN TO GET THE ***JAPANESE*** TO PAY US.>

<QUESTION IS, DO WE GET MORE ***HELPING*** HIM OR ***SELLING*** HIM TO THE JAPANESE?>

<YOU WILL FIX IT.>

<I WILL DO NO SUCH THING.>

<YES YOU *WILL*, DOCTOR LU.>

<OUR HYPERFIELDS ARE LEAKING. LOCAL SPACETIME IS ***DESTABILIZING.*** YOU'VE SEEN IT YOURSELF.>

<AND YOU KNOW IT WON'T STOP HERE. THE FABRIC OF REALITY ***ITSELF*** WILL BE UNRAVELLED BEFORE IT'S OVER.>

<THEN TURN ***OFF*** YOUR ZERO-POINT REACTOR.>

<YOU WOULD LIKE THAT. BUT NO.>

<THIS IS YOUR CHOICE.>

<DO ***NOTHING*** AND YOUR TECHNOLOGY WILL ***DESTROY*** THE WORLD.>

<OR ***FIX*** YOUR DEVICE LET ME BRING ***ORDER*** TO THE WORLD.>

FIRST SOVIET MONGOLIAN ARMY GROUP

<COMMANDER ZHUKOV!>

<SIR! SCOUTS ARE REPORTING FROM GHOST CITY.>

<LET'S HEAR IT.>

<THERE'S NOTHING LEFT BUT SMOKE.>

<AND OUR *ORIGINAL* RECON UNIT?>

<NO SIGN OF THEM, SIR.>

<BUT OUR SCOUTS FOUND JAPANESE TANK TRACKS BEARING TOWARD THE "HIDDEN FORTRESS" RESEARCH STATION.>

<JAPANESE TANKS AT OUR BORDER? A CLEAR VIOLATION OF THE CEASEFIRE!>

<AND *ALL* THE JUSTIFICATION REQUIRED TO FINALLY MOBILIZE AGAINST THEIR LITTLE FORTRESS.>

<THEY ARE BUILDING EXPERIMENTAL WEAPONS THERE. I'M SURE OF IT.>

<WEAPONS THAT MUST *NEVER* BE DEPLOYED AGAINST RUSSIA. I WILL SEE TO THAT.>

OKAY. THIS IS IT.

MY FRIENDS' **LIVES** AND YOUR BIG **PAYDAY** HANG IN THE BALANCE. ARE WE CLEAR ON THE PLAN?

<JUST SMILE AND NOD OR HE'LL KEEP TALKING.>

IT WON'T BE EASY, MEN. BUT SURPRISE IS **EVERYTHING.**

GUYS?

IS THIS **DYNAMITE?!**

I KNOW IT'S NOT REAL DYNAMITE.

CAUSE THAT'D BE CRAZY.

AND IT'D KILL YOU TOO. AND WE'RE ON THE SAME TEAM.

THREE FORTUNES, ONE RAID
PART TWO

<STAND DOWN! DROP YOUR WEAPONS!>

<DO WE LOOK ARMED?>

<WE GOT THE ROBOT. HE'S YOURS FOR A PRICE.>

ONE HOUR LATER...

<GENTLEMEN!>

<I HOPE YOU CAN FORGIVE MY GUARDS.>

<IT WOULD EMBARRASS ME TO NO END WERE THEIR VIGILANCE MISTAKEN AS AN INSULT.>

<HA!>

<IT WOULD BE THE GREATER INSULT ***BY FAR*** IF THEY ***DIDN'T*** CONSIDER US A THREAT.>

<YES, RIGHTLY PUT. NOW, I UNDERSTAND WE HAVE SOME ***BUSINESS*** TO TRANSACT.>

MATSUDA.

<WONDERFUL.>

<YOU KNOW, ***I*** MANAGED TO CAPTURE HIM FOR A TIME AS WELL.>

<MAY I ASK HOW ***YOU*** KEPT HIM FROM ESCAPING?>

<THE SACK IS FULL OF DYNAMITE.>

<DO YOU NOT FIND THAT POSES AT ***LEAST*** AS GREAT A THREAT TO ***YOURSELVES?***>

<HE DON'T MAKE TROUBLE, WE DON'T GOT TO FIND THAT OUT.>

<QUITE ***OBLIGING*** OF HIM.>

<THEN AGAIN, I SUPPOSE IT WAS EVEN ***MORE*** OBLIGING TO HAVE GOTTEN ***INTO*** THE SACK IN THE FIRST PLACE.>

<OH, THAT?>
<THAT WAS THE ***EASY*** PART.>
<WE SAID WE'D SMUGGLE HIM IN HERE AND HELP HIM FIGHT YOU GUYS.>
<***BUT*** HE'S PENNILESS. WHEREAS, ACCORDING TO OUR FIGURES, YOU ***AIN'T.***>
<SO WE DOUBLE-CROSSED HIM. HE CAN BE ***YOURS*** FOR A ***PRICE.***>
<WAY WE SEE IT, YOU OWE US FOR CAPTURE ***AND*** DELIVERY.>
<PLUS EXPENSES.>
<***AND*** THE FINDER'S FEE.>
<***PLUS*** RECOMPENSE FOR KILLING SOME OF OUR MEN.>
<***PLUS*** PAYING FOR OUR ***OLD*** HIDEOUT.>
<PLUS OUR ***NEW*** HIDEOUT.>
<PLUS SURCHARGES ON ***THOSE*** CHARGES.>
<***PLUS*** INTEREST.>
<PLUS SERVICE CHARGES ON ALL OF THE ABOVE.>
YOUR PIRATE FRIENDS BETRAYED ***YOU,*** BUT THEY AREN'T TREATING ME WITH ANY MERCY EITHER.
WELL, YOU DID ***INVADE*** THEIR COUNTRY.
<I'M SURE WE CAN AGREE UPON A ***FAIR*** PRICE.>

<YOU'LL PAY IN BLOOD!>

CHAK

KCHK

CH-CHK

BY THE WAY, IT WAS ALL A TRICK.

SHATTA SHATTA

SHRRRD

<GUNS? THE FABRIC OF REALITY IS ENSLAVED TO MY WILL AND YOU BROUGHT GUNS?>

WAAAAAA

THAT WAS REAL DYNAMITE?

KRAKOOM

THAT WAS REAL DYNAMITE?!

WAS THAT AN EXPLOSION?

IT WAS. ROBO'S ALIVE.

BOOM

THIS IS A *CONVOLUTED* MEANS OF COMMITTING *SUICIDE*, ROBO.

YEAH? I'M SURE THE REALITY-WARPING ENERGY YOU **SHOVED** INTO YOUR **ORGANS** IS WORKING OUT **FINE.**

KAK

IT'S WORKING *WONDERS.*

AND IT'S ONLY GETTING *BETTER.*

I CAN SEE THROUGH *TIME*, ROBO.

**BRAIN TUMORS** CAN MAKE YOU THINK ALL **KINDS** OF CRAZY THINGS, MATSUDA.

<GUARD! YOU'VE GOT TO HELP US!>

<OH NO, IS SOMEONE SICK? I BETTER UNLOCK THE DOOR!>

<GIVE ME A BREAK.>

<OKAY, BUT MATSUDA NEEDS THIS GUY ALIVE, AND I'M NOT SURE HOW LONG THAT'LL LAST SINCE THE CEILING ATTACKED HIM.>

<YOU REALLY WANT TO BE THE GUY MATSUDA BLAMES WHEN HE DIES?>

<DON'T NEED THIS AGGRAVATION.>

WUMP DOOF THUD

<YOU WERE RIGHT TO SUSPECT US.>

MEANWHILE, RUSSIANS

<YOUR ORDERS, COMMANDER ZHUKOV?>

<OPEN FIRE AND DO NOT *STOP* UNTIL NOTHING REMAINS.>

THERE'S NO SHAME IN THIS DEFEAT, ROBO. YOU NEVER HAD A CHANCE.

FWABOOM

FWABOOM

RUSSIANS!

BOOOM KABOOOM

WE HAVE TO FIND DOCTOR LU.

THEN WE HAVE TO FIND THEIR REACTOR.

THOOOM

AND WE HAVE TO DO IT BEFORE THIS PLACE FALLS IN ON US.

WE'D COVER MORE GROUND IF WE SPLIT UP.

AND *THEN* WE'D NEVER FIND EACH OTHER.

B-BOOM

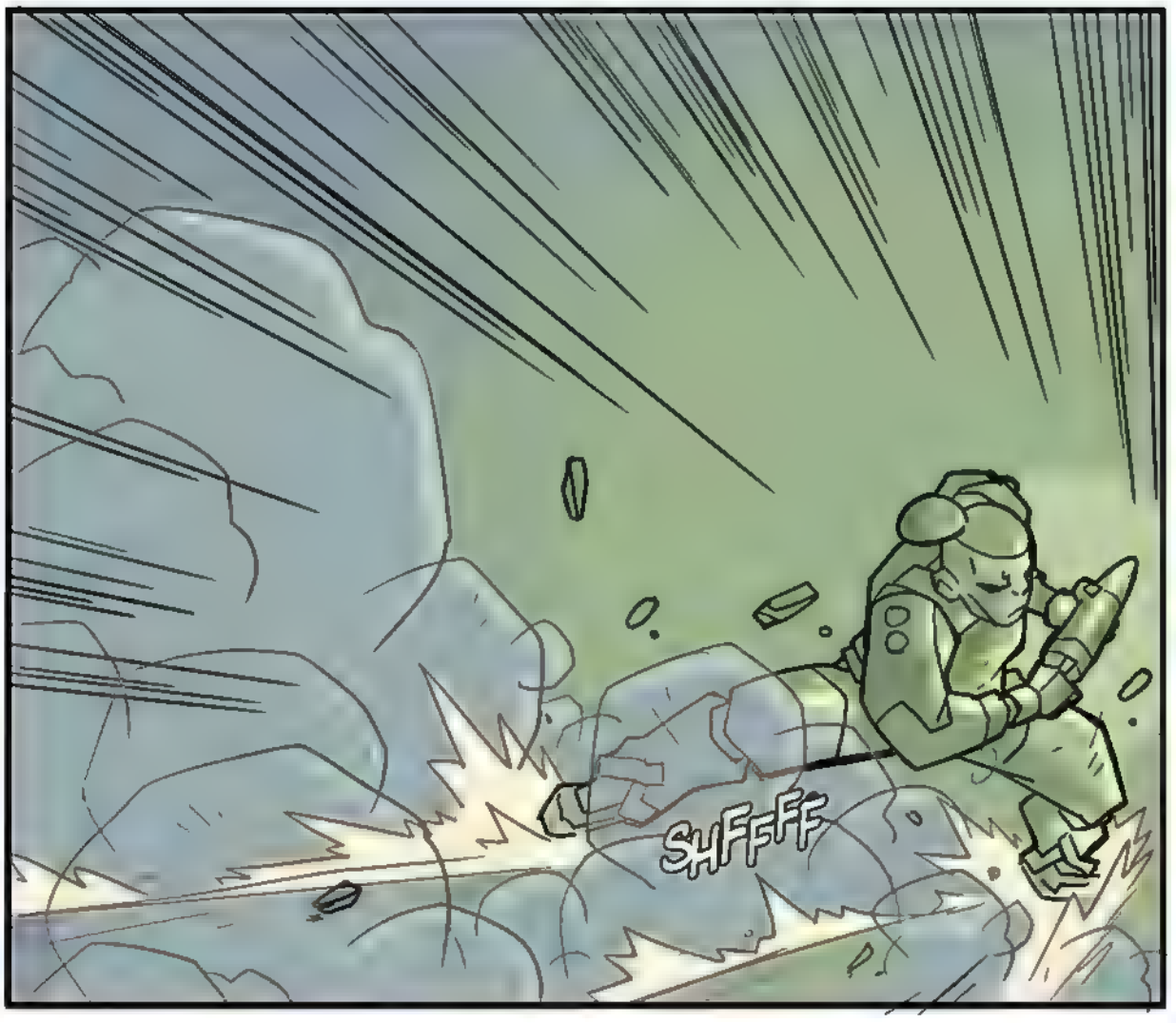
HANG ON.

THEY'VE STOPPED?

<SOMETHING'S WRONG. THE EXPLOSIONS STOPPED.>

THOOM

WHAM


SHFFFF

KRA-BOOOM

THE SHACKLES OF THE MATERIAL UNIVERSE ARE ***UNDONE.***

TIME AND SPACE OBEY MY ***EVERY*** COMMAND, ROBO.

SWELL.

HOW CAN YOU HOPE TO STOP ME WITH YOUR LITTLE ***LINEAR*** MIND?

CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT IT ***IS*** ABOUT ULTIMATE POWER THAT MAKES EVERYONE ***TALK*** LIKE THAT?

<YOU ***SURE*** ABOUT THIS?>

<NO. BUT ANYTHING THAT CAN LIVE THROUGH ***THIS*** MUCH DYNAMITE WAS GONNA KILL US ***ANYWAY.***>

<REMEMBER. I GET ***TRIPLE*** PAY IF I LIVE.>

<IT WAS ***DOUBLE!***>

<YOU WANNA DO THIS?>

<TRIPLE IT IS.>

<SHOULDA PUSHED FOR QUADRUPLE.>

LOOK AT YOU.

CRAWLING THROUGH TIME.

VWORP

<NOW!>

RRRK

WHOP

TOOM

# ATOMIC ROBO

IMPERIAL JAPANESE HIDDEN FORTRESS
MANCHUKUO, 1939

WELL, I DON'T KNOW WHAT *ANY* OF THIS IS...

...BUT IT LOOKS LIKE *EVERYTHING* WE HAVE TO *BREAK.*

WHAT ABOUT DOCTOR LU? *AND* THE GUARDS?

*I'LL* KEEP THE GUARDS BUSY. *YOU* FIND DOCTOR LU.

FWUMP

BLAM BLAM BLAM

BLAM BLAM

CHATTA CHATT

BLAM BLAM BLAM

CHAKKA CHAK

DUNF

BLAM

SHE MUSTN'T DAMAGE THE EQUIPMENT!

YOU WANTED TO ***DESTROY*** THE LAB, DIDN'T YOU?

***YES!*** BUT IT'LL REND THE EARTH ***IN HALF*** IF IT ISN'T DONE ***PROPERLY!***

WELL. *THEY'RE* DEAD.

FOOLISH GIRL!

I'M SORRY, WOULD YOU RATHER GO BACK TO THE *DUNGEON?*

HE'S JUST UPSET BECAUSE THE EARTH *MIGHT* BE DOOMED.

NOT IF *I* CAN HELP IT. BUT IT WILL REQUIRE *TIME.*

NOT SURE THAT'S AN *OPTION,* DOC. REINFORCEMENTS WILL BE HERE ANY MINUTE.

*NOT* IF YOU LEAD THEM *AWAY* WITH A *LOT* OF GUNFIRE.

DOC. WE *JUST* FOUND YOU. WE *CAN'T* SPLIT UP.

YOU'RE RIGHT. BUT DO YOU HAVE A *BETTER* IDEA?

I DON'T.

DOC, YOU KNOW YOUR WAY AROUND. MEET US IN THE GARAGE AS *SOON* AS YOU'RE FINISHED HERE.

YES, YES. *GO.*

<ARE WE ALIVE?>

<TOO SOON TO TELL.>

<YOU NEARLY KILLED ME!>

<IT WASN'T A TRIPLE PAY HAZARD JOB BECAUSE IT WAS EXTRA SAFE.>

<HEY. WE'RE ARGUING. WE'RE DEFINITELY ALIVE.>

DID WE GET HIM?

I'LL TAKE THAT AS A NO.

HUAAAUGH.

<NOW WE'RE DEAD.>

SHOULDA BROUGHT MY LIGHTNING GUN.

FWOOM

SHHHOOP

APPLESAUCE.

WHAT HAVE YOU *DONE?*

WHAM

AIIIEEE!

VWORMP

UH.

VWUMPF

WAIT--

--WHAT?

ZHORP

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE!

HEY. REMEMBER WHEN **YOU** DID THIS TO **YOURSELF?**

THR KOOM

MATSUDA, WHAT HAVE YOU ***DONE?***

***BARELY*** ENOUGH ENERGY LEFT IN THE SYSTEM TO ***SUSTAIN*** THE ZERO-POINT SIPHON. WHERE IS IT ALL ***GOING?***

***COMPLETE*** HYPERGEOMETRIC COLLAPSE IS ***INEVITABLE.***

EARTH ***ITSELF*** WILL BE OBLITERATED.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT THIS DOES.

IF I COULD ***ADJUST*** THE ZERO-POINT REACTOR TO TUNNEL ITS MELTDOWN ***OUTSIDE*** OUR UNIVERSE...

...THAT ***MIGHT*** BE ENOUGH TO MINIMIZE DAMAGE TO LOCAL MINKOWSKI SPACE.

<THIS ISN'T AN ***ESCAPE,*** IT'S ***SUICIDE!***>

<IT'S ONLY ***SUICIDE*** IF IT ***KILLS*** US!>

<I WANT A NEW GANG LEADER.>

TIME IS THE *SHADOW* OF CONSCIOUSNESS!

OH, MY GOD.

SHUT UP!

ZWORPT

D'AH!

THE PRESENT IS AN ILLUSION OF THE PAST *REFRACTING* INTO THE FUTURE.

LINEARITY IS THE *FICTION* OF THE *LENS.*

YOU *SURE* WE'RE GOING THE RIGHT WAY?

THEY BROUGHT US THROUGH THE GARAGE THE *FIRST* TIME I WAS CAPTURED.

AND YOU *DEFINITELY* REMEMBER WHERE IT IS?

*MOSTLY* DEFINITELY, YEAH.

I SHOULDN'T COMPLAIN, BUT *WHERE'S* THE OPPOSITION?

YEAH. THIS PLACE WAS *TEEMING* WITH TROOPS. WHAT GIVES?

*EITHER* THERE'S BEEN A *COMPLETE* BREAKDOWN IN COMMAND.

*OR* THERE'S A *BIG* AMBUSH AND WE'RE ABOUT TO RUN *RIGHT* INTO IT.

*YOU'RE LOSING YOUR MIND!*

THE *MIND* IS A TANGLE OF *WORMS* STRETCHED ACROSS *ETERNITY!*

STOP BEING SO WEIRD!

VUMP

ZWORP

KRONG

WELL. WE FOUND THE GARAGE.

SO DID THEY.

ONE RAID, HALF A FORTUNE

KLIK-KLA-KLIK

VRAAAM

OH, I HOPE IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE DOING THAT.

<WE DON'T WANT TROUBLE.>

<NOR DO WE.>

<GOOD.>

<GREAT.>

RAIDING THEIR ARSENAL JUST IN CASE WE LIVE THROUGH THIS THING. SMART.>

<BUT HOW DO YOU PLAN TO GET *OUT* OF HERE WITH IT?>

vrrumble

<LET'S *GO*. I DON'T WANNA GET KILLED JUST 'CAUSE IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD.>

<WE NEED A RIDE.>
<IT'LL COST YOU.>
<WHAT A SURPRISE.>
<WELL? GET IN.>
<WE HAVE TO WAIT FOR DOCTOR LU.>
<NO DEAL.>
<WE'LL PAY *EXTRA.*>
<DEAD MEN DON'T PAY ANYTHING.>
<*ALL* THIS WAS FOR *NOTHING* IF WE LEAVE WITHOUT HIM.>
<*WE* ARE LEAVING. NOW.>
<YOU WANT TO WAIT? STEAL YOUR OWN TRUCK.>
<REAL FUNNY.>
<HE *SAID* WE'RE *WAITING* FOR DOCTOR LU.>

DEAD WORMS. NOTHING BUT *DEAD WORMS* EATING STARLIGHT.

THAT'S GREAT.

YOU KNOW YOU'RE GOING CRAZY *AND* BECOMING INCORPOREAL?

KRAAAAKOW

SHHKOOOM

WHY CAN'T THE *ENERGY* BE INCORPOREAL TOO?

ROBO!

<GOOD THING WE WAITED SO WE CAN GET KILLED NOW.>

YOU NEED TO GET OUT OF HERE. **NOW.**

NOT WITHOUT DOCTOR LU!

GREAT.

I CAN BUY YOU BETWEEN **ONE** AND **ZERO** MINUTES.

THE UNIVERSE IS ***NOTHING*** BUT ***DUST*** SINGING ITS OWN ***DIRGE.***

CAN'T YOU SLAP ME AROUND **WITHOUT** TALKING CRAZY?

<WHAT'S HE DOING?!>

<GIVING US ***ONE*** SHOT.>

YOU WOULD SPEAK TO ME OF INSANITY?

WHORPT

LOOK AT YOU. A PATCHWORK OF LONG DEAD STARS CRAWLING THROUGH TIME LIKE A WORM.

FWAM

HOPING THE LITTLE DREAMS OF YOUR LITTLE CONSCIOUSNESS WILL STALL OBLIVION. THAT IS INSANITY.

OKAY. BUT YOU'RE THE ONE ABOUT TO BE BLOWN UP BY WORMS.

KABOOOM

SURELY *THAT* WAS NOT YOUR FINAL PLAN.

KA-CLUNK

UH. KINDA *WAS.* YEAH.

PLAN B?

HOPE FOR A *QUICK* DEATH.

IT IS DONE.

SMMMMMM

MY THEORY IS *NOT* A WEAPON.

SHMMMMMMMMM

WWWOOORPF

GOSH.

WHO COULD'VE **GUESSED** TOYING WITH THE FABRIC OF THE **UNIVERSE** COULD END IN **RUIN?**

HUAAAARGH!

ROBO!

WROOOM

kchonk-a-chonk

<MAYBE YOU SHOULD DRIVE *FORWARD.*>

<YEAH, YEAH.>

SHHHHFF

S'OKAY. JUST MY **PRIDE**, MY **FACE**, AND MY **BODY** THAT GOT HURT.

ZHROOOM

DOCTOR LU! *NEVER* SHOULD'VE LEFT HIM BEHIND.

HE *TOLD* US TO.

THIS IS WHAT HE *WANTED.*

IT WAS THE *ONLY* WAY HE COULD *GUARANTEE* THIS WOULDN'T HAPPEN TO HIS THEORIES AGAIN.

SO, UH. THIS ENERGY SYPHON *THING.* IT'LL *STOP,* RIGHT?

*EITHER* YES *OR* WE'RE ABOUT TO FIND OUT WHAT A *SCHWARZSCHILD* RADIUS LOOKS LIKE.

THAT'S ONE OF THOSE *HORRIBLE* ASTROPHYSICAL LIMITS WHERE REALITY BREAKS DOWN, ISN'T IT.

*HEY,* CAN THIS THING GO ANY FASTER?

KRAKBOOOM

WORMS.

STARLIGHT.

DUST.

!
NOW WHAT?
I'M THINKING *BEIJING.* GET BACK WITH THE RESISTANCE AND SEE WHERE THAT TAKES US.
IT'S *US,* IS IT?
...
ISN'T IT?
IT *IS.*
OH, COME *ON!*
YOU DON'T EXPECT ME TO *WALK* ALL THE WAY BACK TO *KUNMING,* DO YOU?!
<WHAT'S HE SAYING?>
<HE'S GONNA *HIRE* US TO SMUGGLE HIM ACROSS A WARZONE.>
<*HAZARD* PAY!>

RUINS OF THE HIDDEN FORTRESS

<GATHER *ALL* THAT REMAINS. BODIES, WRECKAGE, *EVERYTHING.*>

<WE *MUST* LEARN ALL WE CAN ABOUT THIS JAPANESE SUPERWEAPON.>

IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS

<VERY WELL.>

<THERE IS NO TRACE OF DOCTOR MATSUDA *OR* HIS RESEARCH FACILITY.>

<NO MATTER.>

<WE HAVE MATSUDA'S NOTES. THIS IS NOTHING BUT A TEMPORARY SETBACK FOR THE CHOKAITEN PROJECT.>

<REMEMBER.>

<THERE IS NO FORCE ON *EARTH* SO CLOSE AS *WE* ARE TO DEVELOPING ZERO-POINT ENERGY WEAPONS.>

KUNMING, THREE WEEKS LATER

ROBO.

I READ YOUR REPORT.

DAMN SHAME ABOUT LU.

YES, SIR.

STILL. MISSION ACCOMPLISHED.

READY FOR THE *NEXT* ONE?

YES, SIR.

THE END